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## Few Republicans have confidence in elections

By CHRISTINE FERNANDO

Associated Press

SUAMICO, Wis. (AP) — Kim Pytleski could barely sleep the night before. She replayed the PowerPoint slides in her head, packed her notebook and took a deep breath.

The clerk from a rural Wisconsin county north of Green Bay was preparing for a public meeting to explain the election process to residents. She didn't know who she would encounter. Would some in the audience deny the results of the last presidential election? Would the conversation get combative? Most importantly, would she get through to anyone?

They were questions Pytleski never expected to ask herself when she started the job in Oconto County more than 14 years ago. But since then, election conspiracy theories have taken root in the rural, heavily Republican county in northeastern Wisconsin.

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Kathy Bernier, state director of the nonprofit Keep Our Republic, talks during a community engagement event led by the grassroots group on Monday, Sept. 25, 2023, in Suamico, Wis.

Associated Press  
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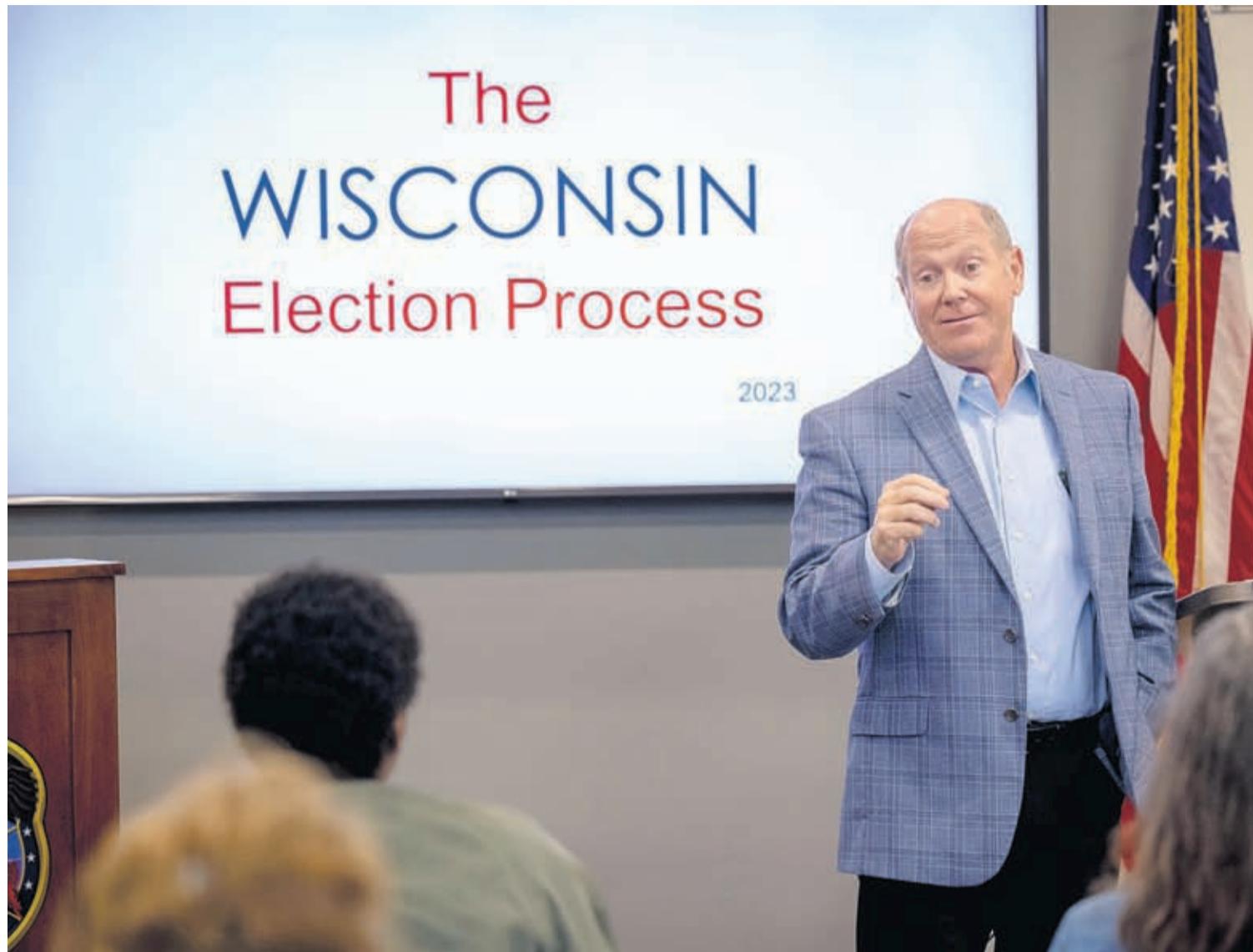
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## Few Republicans have confidence in elections



**Former Rep. Reid Ribble, R-Wis., speaks during a community engagement event led by Keep Our Republic on Monday, Sept. 25, 2023, in Suamico, Wis.**

Associated Press

### Continued from Front

It's among large swaths of the country where distrust of voting and ballot-counting, fanned by former President Donald Trump's false claims of a stolen election, maintains a stubborn grasp. Pytleski, who was born and raised in the county, hears conspiracy theories nearly everywhere she goes: Democrats are paying people to stuff ballot boxes with illegal votes, absentee voting allows rampant fraud, voting machines are hacked by foreign powers such as Russia or China. She receives skeptical letters and emails. Election denialism, she said, "has gotten its hold on it." For elections officials and grassroots democracy groups in the presidential swing state, it has been an uphill fight to combat the doubts and the people who continue to spread them. They describe grappling with an almost faith-like pull of conspiracy theories perpetuated by online

misinformation and far-right figures.

Still, they press on, taking on the issue one community event and one conversation at a time, hoping for a half-step forward.

"This state is vital, and it's ground zero in this fight to save our republic," said Reid Ribble, a Republican who represented the area in Congress until 2017 and is an adviser to the nonprofit Keep Our Republic. The group is holding town hall-style forums throughout Wisconsin hoping to restore faith in elections and has plans to do the same in two other states that will be pivotal to next year's presidential race, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

The group's efforts come as paranoia around elections has gained a persistent foothold across the country, especially in rural areas. That's led to attempts to ditch voting machines in favor of less accurate and efficient hand counts, threats of violence against elec-

tion workers and the violent Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Polling from last summer by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that only 22% of Republicans have high confidence that votes in the 2024 presidential election will be counted accurately, compared to 71% of Democrats, while a solid majority of Republicans continue to believe President Joe Biden's election win was illegitimate.

The deep partisan divide comes amid a relentless campaign of lies from Trump that the 2020 election was stolen as he seeks a second term in the White House.

Wisconsin has been an epicenter of the efforts to undermine faith in elections. The state supreme court, then with a conservative majority, came within one vote in 2020 of overturning the presidential results, and Republicans in the Legislature later launched a par-

tisan investigation seeking evidence of widespread fraud. That probe that eventually landed before a judge who declared that it had uncovered "absolutely no evidence of election fraud." Instead, multiple audits and recounts have affirmed Biden's 21,000-vote win in the state. Yet the doubt remains.

With Coke cans and paper plates stacked with Pepperoni pizza slices, about 50 community members piled into a fire station on a recent evening in Suamico, a town of 13,000 that borders Oconto County on the shores of Lake Michigan, just outside Green Bay.

Flanked on either side by U.S. and Wisconsin flags, a panel of local officials brought together by Keep Our Republic walked attendees through the election process, from how voting equipment is tested to the process of certifying the results. "We're arming people with facts," said Kathy Bernier, state director of

the nonprofit group, which emphasizes that it is nonpartisan. "The best way to help people understand is to bring the experts to them and connect with them like this. Then they can spread that information to their own friends, family and neighbors."

Bernier, a Republican former state senator, broke with her own party to criticize those who disseminate false election claims, drawing pushback from her fellow Republicans across the state. The event in late September was the second in a series she is planning to combat election doubts and conspiracy theories in Wisconsin. The group plans to expand its efforts into Michigan and Pennsylvania.

"I've been yelled at more times than I can count," Bernier said. "People have sent out press releases chastising me. But I'm going to stand my ground because the truth is on my side, and this work needs to be done."

She and others were flooded with questions from residents during the Suamico town hall: How are absentee voters being vetted, are ballot drop boxes secure, what's the difference between voter registrations and ballot request forms, are dead people and undocumented immigrants voting? A meeting scheduled for three hours stretched to five as residents lingered until 10:30 at night. "I can't say for sure that we changed hearts and minds, but they were engaged, that's for sure," Bernier said.

The forum didn't seem to budge several of those who showed up and have become deeply skeptical of the election process.

One attendee, 79-year-old Mary Verheyen, said she trusted the election officials at the event but that it didn't make "any difference at all" in her trust in the system as a whole.

"I believe the people here think like I do and are doing their jobs," she said. "That doesn't mean everyone is." □

# Settlement over Trump family separations at the border limits future separations for 8 years

By REBECCA SANTANA and ELLIOT SPAGAT

Associated Press

**SAN DIEGO (AP)** — The federal government would be barred from immigration policies that separate parents from children for eight years under a proposed court settlement announced Monday that also provides families that were split under the Trump administration with temporary legal status and short-term housing aid.

The settlement between the Biden administration and the American Civil Liberties Union, if approved by a judge, would at least temporarily prohibit the type of "zero-tolerance" policy on illegal immigration under which former President Donald Trump separated thousands of families at the border with Mexico.

"It is our intent to do whatever we can to make sure that the cruelty of the past is not repeated in the future. We set forth procedures through this settlement agreement to advance that effort," Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told The Associated Press.

Trump, the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination, hasn't ruled out reviving the highly controversial tactic at the southern border if he wins next



Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas speaks at a news conference on Wednesday, May 10, 2023.

Associated Press

year's election.

His administration separated children from their parents or guardians they were traveling with as it moved to criminally prosecute people for illegally crossing the border. The children, who could not be held in criminal custody, were transferred to the Department of Health and Human Services and then typically sent to live with a sponsor, often a relative or someone else with a family connection.

Faulty tracking systems caused many to be apart for an extended time or never reunited with their

parents. Facing strong opposition, Trump eventually reversed course in 2018, days before U.S. District Judge Dana Sabraw in San Diego halted the practice and ordered immediate reunification in the lawsuit brought by the ACLU. During a CNN town hall in May, Trump was noncommittal on whether he would again separate families if elected. "When you say to a family that if you come we're going to break you up, they don't come," he said when pressed. Lee Gelernt, lead counsel for the ACLU, said the ban

on any future attempts to separate families as a deterrent to illegal immigration was crucial.

"This settlement means that babies and toddlers will finally get to see their parents after years apart and that these suffering families will have an opportunity to seek lawful status," he said. "Nothing can make these families whole again but this is at least a start."

Under the settlement, it would still be possible to separate children from parents or guardians, but under limited scenarios, as has been the case for many

years. They include if the child is being abused or the parent committed a much more serious crime than crossing the border illegally. President Joe Biden issued an executive order on his first day in office to reunite families. According to figures released by the Department of Homeland Security in February, 3,881 children were separated from their families from 2017 to 2021. About 74% of those have been reunited with their families: 2,176 before a Biden administration task force was created and 689 afterward. Hundreds of families sued the federal government, seeking both monetary damages and policy changes.

In 2021, the government was discussing a possible payment of hundreds of thousands of dollars to each parent and child separated under Trump's policies but talks stalled on that point. But the proposed settlement provides key benefits including authorization for parents of separated children to come to the U.S. under humanitarian parole for three years and work in the United States. The families receive housing aid for up to a year and medical and behavioral health benefits designed to address some of the trauma associated with the separations. □

## The Supreme Court orders makers of gun parts to comply with rules on ghost guns

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Supreme Court on Monday ordered two internet sellers of gun parts to comply with a Biden administration regulation aimed at ghost guns, firearms that are difficult to trace because they lack serial numbers.

The court had intervened once before, by a 5-4 vote in August, to keep the regulation in effect after it had been invalidated by a lower court. No justice dissented publicly from Monday's order, which followed a rul-

ing from a federal judge in Texas that exempted the two companies, Blackhawk Manufacturing Group and Defense Distributed, from having to abide by the regulation of ghost gun kits. Other makers of gun parts also had been seeking similar court orders, the administration told the Supreme Court in a filing.

"Absent relief from this Court, therefore, untraceable ghost guns will remain widely available to anyone with a computer and

a credit card — no background check required," Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar, the administration's top Supreme Court lawyer, wrote.

The regulation changed the definition of a firearm under federal law to include unfinished parts, like the frame of a handgun or the receiver of a long gun, so they can be tracked more easily. Those parts must be licensed and include serial numbers. Manufacturers must also run background



The U.S. Supreme Court is seen, Oct. 5, 2023, in Washington.

Associated Press

checks before a sale — as they do with other commercially made firearms. The requirement applies regardless of how the firearm was made, meaning it includes ghost guns made from individual parts or kits or by 3D printers. The regulation will be in effect while the administration appeals the judge's ruling to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans — and potentially the Supreme Court. □

## FBI report: Violent crime decreases to pre-pandemic levels, but property crime is on the rise



An FBI seal is seen on a wall on Aug. 10, 2022, in Omaha, Neb.  
Associated Press

By JIM SALTER  
Associated Press

**ST. LOUIS (AP)** — Violent crime across the U.S. decreased last year — dropping to about the same level as before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic — but property crimes rose substantially, according to data in the FBI's annual crime report released Monday.

The report comes with an asterisk: Some law enforcement agencies failed to provide data. But a change in collection methods in compiling 2022 numbers helped, and the FBI said the new data represents 83.3% of all agencies covering 93.5% of the population. By contrast, last year's numbers were from only 62.7% of agencies, representing 64.8% of Americans.

Violent crime dropped 1.7%, and that included a 6.1% decrease in murder and non-negligent manslaughter. Rape decreased 5.4% and aggravated assault dropped 1.1%, but robbery increased 1.3%. Violent crime had also decreased slightly in 2021, a big turnaround from 2020, when the murder rate in the U.S. jumped 29% during the pandemic that created huge social disruption and upended support systems.

The violent crime rate of 380.7 per 100,000 people was a tick better than 2019 — the year before the pandemic hit the U.S., when the rate was 380.8 per 100,000 people.

Richard Rosenfeld, criminal

justice professor emeritus at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, said the drop in violence can be attributed largely to the fact that the "stresses and strains" associated with the pandemic have abated.

"By and large what we're seeing is simply a return to something approaching normal after the big changes associated with the pandemic," Rosenfeld said. Despite the waning violence, property crimes jumped 7.1%, with motor vehicle thefts showing the biggest increase at 10.9%. The FBI said carjackings increased 8.1% from 2021, and the vast majority of carjackings involving an assailant with a weapon. Someone was injured in more than a quarter of all carjackings.

Rachael Eisenberg, managing director of rights and justice for the Washington, D.C.-based Center for American Progress, said that while the FBI report looks at 2022 data, more recent statistics indicate that the drop in violent crime will continue through this year.

In fact, the FBI findings are in line with a report released in July by the nonpartisan think tank the Council on Criminal Justice. That report using data from 37 surveyed cities found that murders dropped 9.4% in the first half of 2023 compared to the first half of 2022, but vehicle thefts rose a whopping 33.5%.

Last year's FBI report arrived with major caveats since

nearly two-fifths of all policing agencies failed to participate, including big cities like New York, Los Angeles and Miami. That followed a major overhaul in the reporting system.

For this year's report, the FBI used data voluntarily collected from agencies using the newer National Incident-Based Reporting System, but also included data from agencies still using an older system, known as the Summary Reporting System. That accounted, in part, for the huge increase in participating agencies.

The overhaul will eventually make crime data more modern and detailed, federal officials said, but the switchover can be complicated for police departments. While the increase in 2022 participation was due in part to inclusion of Summary Reporting System data, the FBI noted that an additional 1,499 agencies submitted data through NIBRS. This year's report showed that while the number of adult victims of fatal gun violence decreased 6.6%, the estimated number of juvenile victims rose 11.8%. Gun-safety advocates decry the loosening of gun laws, especially in conservative-leaning states around the U.S.

Assaults on law enforcement officers rose 1.8% compared to 2021. An estimated 31,400 of the 102,100 assaults resulted in injuries in 2022, up 1.7% from the previous year.

Violent crime overall remains far lower than the historic highs of the 1990s. While the direct impact has ebbed, Rosenfeld said the pandemic could still indirectly result in more crime. The pandemic prompted many firms to allow employees to work from home some or all of the time. Desolate city streets make crime more likely.

"The more people in the street, the more people difficult it is for somebody to commit a crime because there are so many eyes on the street," Rosenfeld said. □

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The inside of a Reese's candy wrapper shows details of a sweepstakes offer in this photo taken in Ann Arbor, MI., on Friday, Oct. 13, 2023.

Associated Press

## Reese's \$25,000 promotion may violate sweepstakes laws

By DEE-ANN DURBIN  
AP Business Writer

Reese's may be in violation of state and federal laws with its new sweepstakes offer currently advertised on packs of peanut butter cups.

The promotion on two-cup packages reads "You could win \$25,000" and, in smaller print, "See details inside." But only after consumers have bought and opened a package can they see the small print: no purchase is necessary to enter the sweepstakes.

The Reese's contest was first reported Monday by Edgar Dworsky, a consumer advocate and former assistant attorney general in Massachusetts, who runs the Consumer World website.

Hershey Co., that Pennsylvania candymaker that owns the Reese's brand, didn't immediately respond to telephone and email messages left Monday by The Associated Press.

Sweepstakes are primarily governed by state laws, which require that no purchase is necessary to participate. A contest that requires a purchase is a lottery, which is subject to different rules.

Three federal agencies — Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Communications Commission and the U.S. Postal Service — also enforce laws governing sweepstakes depending on the medium. The Postal Service requires mailed sweepstakes offers to make clear that no purchase is necessary, for example. The FTC doesn't govern sweepstakes specifically, but has broad laws prohibiting "unfair and deceptive acts."

The FTC said Monday that it can't comment on the practices of particular companies outside of an investigation. It wouldn't confirm or deny an investigation against Hershey.

Dworsky said a sign near Reese's candy displays making clear that no purchase is necessary might meet legal requirements. But a spot check of candy displays in multiple states, including California, Virginia and Washington, found no such signs.

Dworsky noted that Reese's ran a similar promotion earlier this year that ended in April using the same packaging. Some of those packages are still for sale, even though the sweepstakes code has expired, he said.

Dworsky said he's concerned that the packaging could lure consumers into thinking they need to buy it. "You never have to pay to play. All these packages should be recalled," he said. □

# EU leaders will meet to deal with the fallout in Europe from the Israel-Hamas war

By LORNE COOK and RAF CASERT

Associated Press

**BRUSSELS (AP)** — European Union leaders will hold an emergency summit on Tuesday as concern mounts that the war between Israel and the Palestinian militant group Hamas could fuel inter-communal tensions in Europe and bring more refugees in search of sanctuary.

The leaders will also attempt to restore some order after a series of social media messages, statements and visits by EU officials sowed confusion about the 27-nation bloc's intentions after Hamas attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, triggering a new war in Gaza.

More than 4,000 people have been killed in Israel and Gaza since Hamas launched its bloody rampage and almost 200 Israelis, including children, were taken hostage. Rallies in support of both sides have been held around Europe. Some have been banned. "The conflict could have major security consequences for our societies," EU Council President Charles Michel said on Monday as he announced the video summit. The meeting will also focus on getting aid to civilians and working with other countries in the region to try to



European Council President Charles Michel speaks during an exclusive interview with the Associated Press at the EU Council in Brussels, Friday Oct. 13, 2023.

Associated Press

stop tensions from spreading.

Over the last week, France has ordered a ban on pro-Palestinian demonstrations and the number of antisemitic acts has risen. Both the EU and the United States consider Hamas to be a terrorist organization. In the Paris area, the Louvre Museum and the Palace of Versailles evacuated visitors and staff after receiving bomb threats over the weekend, and the French government started deploying 7,000 troops to increase security around the

country following a fatal school stabbing by a suspected Islamic extremist. Germany too has ramped up security. Berlin has offered military help to Israel and promised to crack down on support for Hamas at home. Chancellor Olaf Scholz has underlined Germany's historical responsibility for Israel's security.

Michel said that the war "has a potential to worsen tensions between communities and to feed extremism" in Europe, and that "there is a major risk of migration and movements of

a large number of people to neighboring countries." He said that the leaders would look at ways to help civilians in Israel and Gaza caught up in the war and to work with other countries in the Middle East and Persian Gulf regions to try to prevent the conflict from spreading.

In an interview with The Associated Press Friday, Michel warned that an outflow of people from Gaza could worsen divisions within the EU. "If there would be more difficulties at the regional level, we would

have immediately huge difficulties on the European soil because of the refugees," he said.

More than a million people have fled their homes in Gaza ahead of an expected Israeli ground invasion aimed at destroying Hamas.

Michel condemned "the brutal terrorist attacks" and said that "Israel has the right to defend itself in full compliance with international law and international humanitarian law."

Also high on the leaders' list of concerns will be the EU's embarrassing mixed messages over the conflict. Just after Hamas launched its attack, a commissioner at the bloc's executive branch announced that development aid meant to help the Palestinian Authority beat poverty would be immediately suspended. Hours later, the European Commission's position had changed. Instead, it announced an urgent review of the assistance to ensure that no money is being misused. Since it is listed by the EU as a terror group, Hamas does not receive such any funds anyway.

On Saturday, the commission said that it was tripling humanitarian aid to Gaza - money meant to be used in times of crisis or disaster like the war. □

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Associated Press

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ing 7,000 troops to increase security around the country following a fatal school stabbing by a suspected Islamic extremist. □

## Trump sues ex-British spy over dossier containing 'shocking and scandalous claims'

By BRIAN MELLEY

Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — A lawyer for Donald Trump told a London judge Monday the ex-president plans to prove that "shocking and scandalous claims" about him in a largely discredited report by a former British spy were false and harmed his reputation.

Trump has sued the company founded by Christopher Steele, who created a dossier in 2016 that contained rumors and uncorroborated allegations about Trump that erupted in a political storm just before he was inaugurated. Trump is seeking damages from Orbis Business Intelligence for allegedly violating British data protection laws.

Steele's firm is seeking to have the case thrown out and a judge said she would rule at a later date after hearing arguments in London's High Court.

The lawsuit comes as Trump is the front-runner for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination while facing legal problems on the other side of the Atlantic.

Trump's lawyers are currently fighting a civil fraud trial in New York alleging he and company executives deceived banks, insurers and others by overvaluing his assets and exaggerat-



Christopher Steele, foreground right, leaves the Royal Courts of Justice after the first hearing in Donald Trump's High Court claim against the former MI6 officer's intelligence consultancy, in London. Monday, Oct. 16, 2023.

Associated Press

ing his net worth to secure loans and make deals. He also faces four separate criminal cases for allegations including mishandling classified documents, trying to overturn the results of the 2020 election, and paying hush money to a porn actress to cover up an affair.

His lawyer noted in court Monday that Trump is a "controversial figure" who "expresses himself in strong language" and has faced

criticism from judges in the U.S. However, he said none of that is relevant in the current case.

Trump "suffered personal and reputational damage and distress" because his data protection rights were violated, attorney Hugh Tomlinson said.

Steele, who once ran the Russia desk for the Secret Intelligence Service, also known as MI6, was paid by Democrats to compile research that included

salacious allegations that Russians could potentially blackmail Trump for sexual activity. Trump said the dossier was fake news and a political witch hunt.

Tomlinson said it "contained shocking and scandalous claims about the personal conduct of President Trump" and included allegations he paid bribes to Russian officials to further his business interests. Trump's case "is that this personal data is egregious-

ly inaccurate," he said.

Tomlinson said Trump plans to vindicate himself in court by providing evidence that the report's claims were false.

In a written witness statement, Trump said that despite Steele's assertions the allegations have not been disproven, they were "wholly untrue."

Trump said he had not engaged in "perverted sexual behavior including the hiring of prostitutes ... in the presidential suite of a hotel in Moscow," taken part in "sex parties" in St. Petersburg, bribed Russian officials, or provided them with "sufficient material to blackmail me." He also said he had not bribed, coerced or silenced witnesses.

Orbis wants the lawsuit thrown out because it said the report was never meant to be made public and was published by BuzzFeed without the permission of Steele or Orbis. It also said the claim was filed too late. Orbis attorney Antony White said Trump has a "deep and intense animus against" Steele and the firm and a "a long history of repeatedly bringing frivolous, meritless and vexatious claims for the purpose of vexing and harassing perceived enemies and others against whom he bears a grudge." □



Venezuelan President of the National Assembly Jorge Rodriguez, left, shakes hands with Venezuelan opposition delegate Gerardo Blyde Perez in Mexico City, Aug. 13, 2021.

Associated Press

By CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN and FATIMA HUSSEIN

**MEXICO CITY (AP)** — Venezuela's government and opposition will resume their dialogue,

mediated by Norway, with talks scheduled for Tuesday in Barbados, Norway's embassy in Mexico said Monday in a brief statement posted to

## Venezuela and opposition to resume talks in Barbados, mediator Norway says

the platform X. Mexico hosted multiple rounds of talks in 2021 and 2022.

When they last met, in November 2022, the sides agreed to create a U.N.-managed fund to finance health, food and education programs for the poor while the U.S. government agreed to allow oil giant Chevron to pump Venezuelan oil.

Colombia and other countries have tried in recent months to restart negotiations between the sides, but the government of President Nicolás Maduro has demanded that the U.S.

drop economic sanctions and unfreeze Venezuelan funds held overseas as a condition of resuming talks.

Norway's statement Monday said that the two sides had decided to resume the dialogue "with the objective of reaching a political agreement." Venezuela's government did not immediately comment. A U.S. official who requested anonymity to discuss the sensitive negotiations said there was no "deal" between the U.S. government and Venezuela.

The official said the Biden

administration supports Venezuelan-led negotiations and is prepared to provide relief from sanctions in response to concrete actions toward holding competitive elections. The dialogue formally began in September 2021, but President Maduro's delegates walked away from negotiations in October 2021 after Colombia-born businessman Alex Saab was extradited on money laundering charges from Cape Verde to the U.S. Maduro conditioned a resumption on the release of Saab. □

## Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins

(Oranjestad)—According to Etnia Nativa, in the 18th century most of the inhabitants of Aruba were indigenous who lived on the north coast, one of the largest communities lived in Alto Vista.

As they were very religious, they had a chief with the name of Antonio Silvester who guided them in the Christian life and it was he who decided to build a stone chapel with a roof of corn rods, which would serve as a place of prayer. In 1750 it was blessed by Father Algemesi who came from Coro-Venezuela and appointed Domingo Antonio Silvester as the island's first prosecutor in the name of the Spanish crown and Rome. In 1752 the prosecution passed into the hands of Antonio Silvester's son-in-law, Miguel Alvarez, who continued to guide the parishioners in their prayers.

According to the book, The History of Alto Vista by R.H. Nooyen, it is not known when Domingo Antonio Silvester came to Aruba from Venezuela. The elders believe Antonio was a Spaniard. In 1780, father Joseph Antonio de la Vegal called



Bernardino Silvester, one of Antonio's sons with his wife Anna Cathalina Tromp, "neighbors and naturals of the island Aruba" and thus they became natives.

At the end of the eighteen century many inhabitants of the island died as a result of the black fever epidemic and since people believed that the Alto Vista area was the most infected, they began to build their homes further south within the Noord area, so the town of Noord began to grow into a community till getting its own Church. However religious festivals continued

to be celebrated at this sacred native place, with the custom of arriving in procession to Alto Vista.

Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found the old foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holiest Rosary to build a new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people

can see the remains of around twenty houses, some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays, only around six of these houses remain.

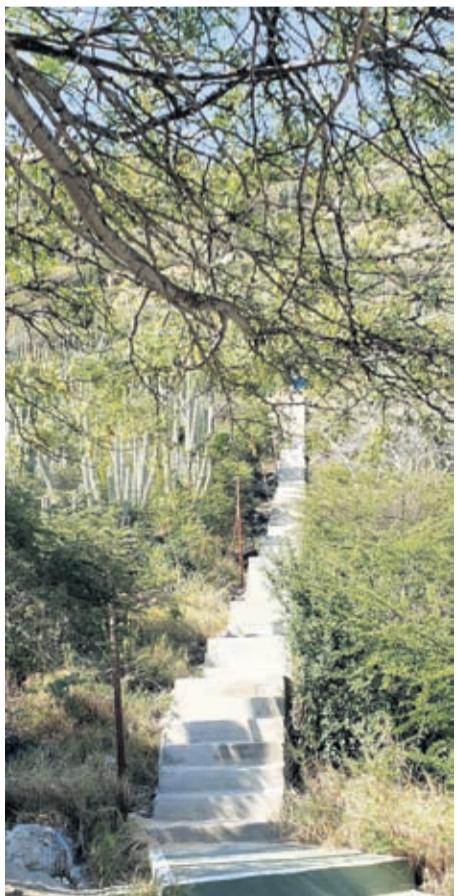
South of the chapel in the yard two graves can be observed, there was the cemetery which father Pablo de Algemesi blessed. It is not certain, but it is believed that the two graves belong to Antonio Silvester and Miguel Alvarez, according to Nooyen. About 50 meters near the chapel there are still the markings of an old house, where Antonio and Bernardino



Silvester would have lived. About 200 meters from the chapel there is a water tank which the locals call Tanki Cacique. In the past this tank was closed. But mostly water was brought out from the Poz di Noord, a well dug in the sand.

The chapel can be viewed from basically any point in the north side, even from Paradera and Sero Plat. All the historical remains around the chapel provide us with an idea on how the old people of Alto Vista used to live. Don't miss the opportunity to visit a place of historical significance with a window to Aruba's past.□

## Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill



(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on the island at 165 meters above sea level (or about 540 feet above sea level). The highest point is Jamana-ta Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the Arikok National Park.

The staircase that runs on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consisted of 900 steps.



Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the government decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stairs for a little rest. The view at this resting stop is also a sight to see.

The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day.□

**Correction:**

The article published yesterday for our valued client Casa del Mar, regarding a July sales special was erroneously published due to an internal mistake. Aruba Today would like to sincerely and profusely

apologize to Casa del Mar for the inconveniences caused by our error, as well as extend the apologies to our much appreciated readers who might have been affected by the incorrectly published article.

On this page we offer the correct article for the current offers for Casa del Mar.

Once again, our sincerest apologies.

## Casa del Mar Beach Resort Aruba Announces Exclusive Offer: Multiple Consecutive Weeks of Ownership at a 20% Discount!

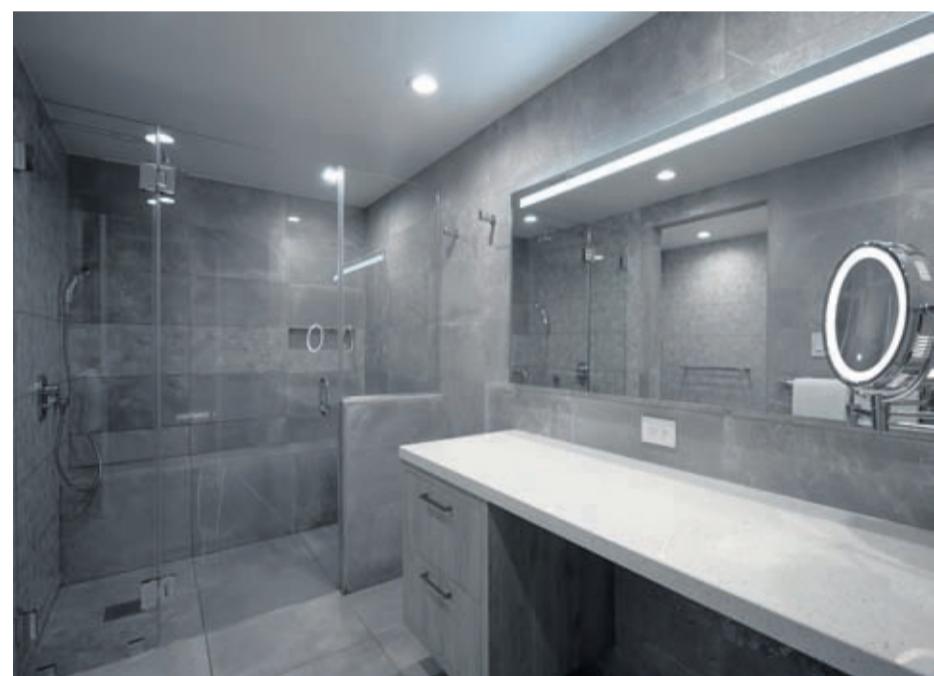


**Oranjestad, Aruba – Casa del Mar, the premier name in vacation ownership, is thrilled to announce an offer that will redefine the way you experience vacations. Now, you can secure multiple consecutive weeks of ownership in the same suite at Casa del Mar with an exclusive 20% discount! This extraordinary opportunity allows you to indulge in extended, unforgettable getaways while enjoying all the benefits of ownership at Casa del Mar without having to change rooms during your stay!**

Casa del Mar is renowned for its commitment to providing "home away from home" vacation experiences, and this latest offer is no exception.

Here are just a few of the exceptional benefits you'll enjoy when you become an owner at Casa del Mar:

- 1. Discounts on Multiple Weeks Bundle:** With this new offer, Casa del Mar extends its commitment to delivering value to its new owners. By securing multiple consecutive weeks, you'll not only enjoy the convenience of extended stays without the hassle of changing rooms, but also benefit from an exclusive 20% discount on the listing prices, making your dream vacations more affordable than ever.
- 2. Versatile Accommodations:** Choose from our exquisite renovated One-Bedroom Ambassador suites, perfect for accommodating up to four guests, or our spacious Two-Bedroom Presidential suites that comfortably host up to six people. Our suites are designed to provide the utmost comfort and luxury, ensuring that your stay is nothing short of extraordinary.
- 3. Perpetual Ownership:** Casa del Mar offers you the unique opportunity to secure your vacation year after year through perpetual ownership. With Casa del Mar, you have a cherished destination to return to, creating a lifetime of cherished memories, which can



be passed onto future generations.

- 4. Global Exchange Value:** As a Casa del Mar owner, your suite and ownership grants access to a worldwide network of luxury vacation destinations. Enjoy the flexibility of exchanging your weeks for incredible experiences at other resorts around the world, opening doors to new adventures and cultures.

"This exclusive offer reflects Casa del Mar's commitment to providing new owners with the ultimate vacation experience," said Starr Ramos, Marketing, Communications, Activities & Members Relations Manager at Casa del Mar. "We understand that potential new owners value both flexibility and affordability, which is why we are thrilled to offer multiple consecutive weeks of ownership with a substantial 20% discount. It's our way of saying thank you for choosing Casa del Mar."

Don't miss out on this exceptional opportunity to own your vacation paradise. Casa del Mar invites you to discover the world of vacation ownership with unparalleled benefits.

For more information about Casa del Mar and this exclusive ownership opportunity, please visit [www.casadelmararuba.com/inventory](http://www.casadelmararuba.com/inventory) or contact our dedicated team at [sales@casadelmararuba.com](mailto:sales@casadelmararuba.com) and request our buyers guide - or just give us a call at 297-582-7000 Ext. 614.

### About Casa del Mar:

Casa del Mar is a premier luxury vacation ownership provider dedicated to delivering exceptional vacation experiences. With a commitment to quality, convenience, and value, Casa del Mar has become a trusted name in the industry, offering a lifetime of unforgettable vacations. □

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## Rhythms Circus Company Aruba: putting Aruba's name on the world stage



**Rhythms Circus Company Aruba** is a talented group of young people working daily to present their art in the form of acrobatics, dancing, acting and singing. After an impactful participation in one of America's biggest talent shows, they are now bringing their amazing talent to Aruba!

In a show full of light, music, and performances to famous musical figures like Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson and Tina Turner, the group consisting of 15 people from various countries delights the audience with their artistic prowess at the Paseo Herencia Mall, every Wednesday and Friday starting at 7pm. Each day has a different show, so you can attend both nights for the complete experience!

The group, under the leadership of directors and creators Diego Jaramillo and Yamila Hernandez are opening the doors to the ballroom

to our local audience as well as our visitors so that everyone can have the privilege of experiencing this wonderful show.

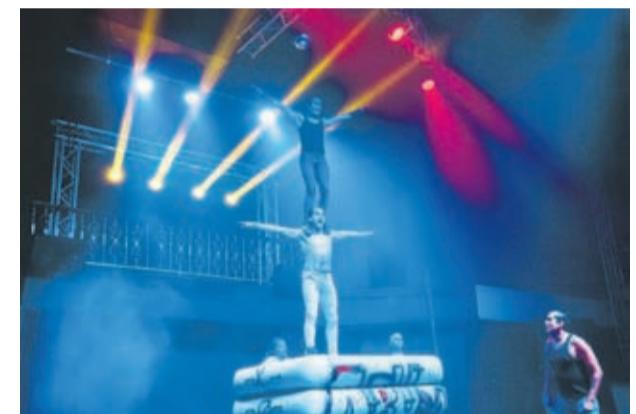
Hernandez explained that the idea for this project started in 2010 when she came to work in Aruba. After being on the island for a while she decided to stay and live here, and she met Diego Jaramillo, who is currently her partner. Together they came with the idea to establish a company together with other professional artists, with the goal of living from their art.

Hernandez says that the work is hard – all of the performers are professional artists, and while the production of the show is not a challenge for them, selling the idea proved difficult since at the time, there weren't any shows of its kind on the island.

### America's Got Talent

Currently they are offering a show with music, choreography and at the end, they have a shocking acrobatics ending, one that was seen by thousands of people around the world when the group travelled to Los Angeles in the United States to represent Aruba in America's Got Talent. Hernandez said that the show was very important for them to meet the public present because people could experience this performance live and right before their eyes.

Their presentation in America's Got Talent "was incredible" and they were able to meet the



jury and many other artists staying there for three months. But the exhaustion and physical toll was so great that Diego suffered an accident, and because of this, they had to cancel all future commitments.

### Reservations and tickets

To make a reservation to see this incredible display of creativity and acrobatics, scan the QR code which will take you directly to their website for a booking. To find more information about RCCA, please visit their Instagram page @rccaruba. □



## Visit the historic museum at Fort Zoutman!

(Oranjestad)—Located in the middle of downtown Oranjestad, situated right next to the government building "Cocolishi", is one of the oldest buildings of Aruba: Fort Zoutman. First constructed in 1796, this site has been used (or left unused) in many ways and have survived eras of war and attempted dismantling.

When anyone refers to Fort Zoutman, they are actually referring to two separate

buildings that, over the years, have been merged: the fort and the tower. That's right, the iconic 5-story, squared tower was not part of the original structure of the fort, and is actually called "Willem III Toren". Constructed in 1867, this tower was named after the then-reigning king of The Netherlands, Willem III. Willem III Toren was originally a light tower, but after a request from Lieutenant Governor Jan Helenus in 1866, it

also became a bell tower. The fort itself was originally constructed to protect the commerce bay of Paardenbaai from pirates and other disreputable characters roaming the Caribbean Sea. Unlike the Willem III Toren, Fort Zoutman had a more tumultuous past, including the on-and-off reception of unwanted members of the English military several times (The Netherlands was at constant war with England back in the colonial era).

Over the years, both the fort and the tower had functioned as different government center points, including a tax and stamps office. For some time these two buildings also housed a police precinct and jail, and even experienced abandonment until the Cultural Center Aruba Foundation (CCA) petitioned for its renovation in 1964, turning the site into the Historic Museum it currently is. Despite its small size, The Historic Museum guards a rich

depository of the commercial, military and social history of Oranjestad, offering a glance into how the social culture of the town came to be. If you are interested in history and want to learn more about Aruba, then Fort Zoutman should definitely be included into your itinerary.

The museum is open Monday to Friday from 9am-6pm, and Saturday from 10am-2pm.

**Source: The Old Fort of Aruba by Jan Hartog.**

## A brief history of the California Light House

(Oranjestad)—At the furthest western point of the island, there lies the tallest structure on the island: The California Light House. Standing on top of a limestone cliff, this lighthouse oversees the entire island, offering one of few best views of the island and the surrounding sea. It is also one of the few monuments that hold a rich history.

The lighthouse was constructed in between 1914-1916, and its first keeper was a young trained lighthouse keeper from Curacao names Jacob Jacobs. Mr. Frederico Fingal was the last man to have occupied this position until 1962. Though his son, Mr. Romulo Fingal did not continue in his father's footsteps, he does have a special connection to the lighthouse. He sat down with our reporter and shared a bit of its history.

As Mr. Fingal explains, "In 1915, cargo donkeys were hired from Figaroa di Noord to help build the Lighthouse at Westpunt. The donkeys had to walk along the beach all the way to Westpunt carrying the cargo, poles, cement, and all these things. At that time, it was a difficult task until Aruba got its first truck. These things reflect how people could have accomplished this tremendous job with so little." Mr. Fingal said, "At that time, it wasn't a place for people to work. It was very challenging because it was full of goats and donkeys, and it was very isolated. There were no hotels or roads to get there. There was only a donkey trail. Those were the only means of transportation."

Mr. Fingal continues, "In 1939, I was born in the lighthouse, and my father was the last lighthouse keeper until he retired in 1962. After that, they removed the power cables all the way to the top. According to the story, we couldn't have the light ourselves because they dismantled it, and after many years, I heard that it is in a train museum



in San Nicolas, where we found this very special lens that, when the light shines through it, it reaches 30 kilometers out to sea." Mr. Fingal told our reporter.

The lighthouse has a long and very interesting history. The reason why the lighthouse was built, according to Mr. Fingal, dates back to the day when the cargo ship S.S. California sank because of the lack of light. In 1913, Aruba made a request to Curacao to build

a Lighthouse at Westpunt, and the governor of Curacao responded to Aruba to come back in 1915 with a well-detailed plan. "During the First World War from 1914 to 1918, they had to wait for the light to be transported to Aruba because it was manufactured in France. At that time, there was no electricity, and the light was very interesting because it rotated with a kerosene lamp that planes used; clean kerosene," Mr. Fingal said.



Mr. Fingal discovered something very interesting about the lighthouse after much research was documented in his book 'History of the Lighthouse at Westpunt.' He found many details: "I found out that the height of the lighthouse was due to the absence of electricity. There was also the presence of coral. There is a long steel cable from where the light is, and under the light, at the highest point, there is a hanging weight, a sort of pendulum that swings like that, with a weight that measures about 1 meter by 30 centimeters wide, which is a block of solid iron attached to a cable. When you release it upwards, it comes down, and the weight that comes down pulls it up, gradually. And while it comes down, the same weight that is descending causes many small wheels to turn in the opposite direction. The Lighthouse rotates from 6 pm in the evening, when the sun sets, until 6 am in the morning. During the entire night, the light shines on the lantern, it goes down 24 meters, and

the Lighthouse is 30 meters high. It is designed not to collapse," Mr. Fingal explains.

Mr. Fingal further explains that in one night, the lighthouse rotates 4,320 times and consumes one gallon of kerosene for the whole operation. "At that time, the kerosene was supplied from the Lago refinery. Every day it was brought down, and to start the light again, they had to lift the weight up, so our job as children was to crank it and raise the weight back up in the evening when the light stuck, they would take it down again, and the light stayed down. That's how it worked for a very long time," Mr. Fingal explains.

Thanks to the Monument Fund Aruba, which worked hard and is currently in charge of the Lighthouse, Mr. Fingal is very happy with its preservation, along with all the renovations that have taken place. He hopes that the story of the lighthouse will continue to live on for future generations. □

## Unique fauna of Aruba

**For a small island, Aruba sure has a lot of unique treasures. Among these, we have some subspecies of animals that are unique to our island. These have evolved to perfectly adapt to our desert climate and make Aruba their home. At the same time, they are part of what makes Aruba truly one of a kind.**

### Cascabel (rattlesnake, *Crotalus durissus unicolor*)

According to the Arikok National Park, Aruba knows two kinds of snakes, the Santanero and the Cascabel. The cascabel belongs to the rattlesnake family. The cascabel is the only venomous snake from Aruba. It has a length of 65cm to 100cm, and is about 4 to 5cm wide. Its color varies from light brown to grey-brown, and its underbelly is white. On its back there are marks that are a little darker, in the shape of diamonds.

Its reproduction is oviparous, meaning the offspring can hatch from their eggs just before, during or immediately after laying.

The cascabel lives mainly in the Arikok National Park. It likes to live in dark places, and is thus found hidden among the limestone rocks and under stones. As a defense mechanism, the cascabel uses its rattle as a warning, and it is not an aggressive animal.

The cascabel feeds on lizards, small mammals such as rats and mice. It paralyzes or kills its prey with its venom, which is injected through a bite. The enemies of the cascabel are donkeys, goats, humans and cars. Humans are the biggest enemy of the cascabel, as they kill them and destroy their habitat for urbanization.

### Shoco (burrowing owl, *Athene cunicularia arubensis*)

The shoco is a small bird which is seldom seen. They are active during the day but are more active later in the day and at night for hunting. These owls have very good night

vision and very good hearing. The shoco is the national symbol of Aruba.

The shoco has about 20cm of length, and the females are slightly heavier than the males. They are light brown in color, with many white spots. The belly of the Shoco is either white or light brown, and the shoco has striking yellow eyes. Its beak is yellow/green. Young owls do not have white spots and are lighter in color.

The nest of the shoco is a burrow in the ground. If the shoco cannot find a burrow, it will dig one in soft soil. The shoco lays one or two eggs every other day until all the eggs are laid – a shoco can lay up to four eggs. The first owlets hatch after three to four weeks. The shoco owl takes care of the owlets for three months until they leave the nest. Only a few owlets survive.

The owls dig burrows in the ground with low grass vegetation. An owl can live up to nine years.

Its defense mechanism is simply to fly away or retreat to its burrows. They eat mostly insects, mice and lizards, and the main threats to their survival are boas – an invasive species introduced by humans as pets – and humans through destruction of their habitat.

### Prikichi (parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*)

The Prikichi is the national bird of Aruba. On Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, parakeets can be found, but each of the three islands has a different breed. The Yellow-shouldered Amazon parakeet that we have on Aruba is also found along the coast of Venezuela. Unfortunately, there is interbreeding between the breeds due to cage birds from, for example, Curaçao being released on Aruba. The parakeet population on Aruba is in danger due to extensive deforestation occurring on the island because of the growing population.



Prikichi (parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*)

The prikichi weighs between 90 to 100 grams. It has a greenish-brown head with some yellow around the eye. The back and wings of the parakeet are dark green, and the underside of the body is a lighter shade of green. There is also a bit of blue in the wings. The parakeet's beak is gray/black.

Parakeets often use termite nests as breeding sites. Parakeets are found in all natural environments (mondi) of the island. It defends itself by flying away and loud cries. Parakeets eat seeds from the pods of the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi, and columnar cactus. They also consume natural fruits. Its main predators are boa constrictors, humans.

### Conew (cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus nigronuchalis*)

The Eastern Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) was probably brought over to the island by Indian settlers thousands of years ago as a source of food. This rabbit, locally known as Conew, has spread all over the island and has become part of our ecosystem. The very adaptable Conew can live in a wide variety of habitats, including Aruba's xeric scrublands, where it typically grazes on weeds and grasses.

The Aruban Conew has a brownish

grey color and a distinctive white belly. This white fur extends to the bottom of the tail which becomes visible as the rabbit runs. These rabbits can grow up to approximately 40 centimeters in length over their short lifespan of 3 years. Cottontail rabbits reach reproductive maturity when they are just 2 to 3 months old. A female rabbit, called a doe, finds a suitable nest spot under a shrub or rocks and lines it with fur. She can have an average of 3 to 4 litters per year averaging 5 young each. The doe only visits her young once or twice a day to nurse her babies for a period of 2 to 3 weeks. The young reach independence at 4 to 5 weeks.

The Aruban Conew is an endangered species and protected by Aruban law. The Conew is thought to have drastically declined due to an increase in human activities, habitat fragmentation and predation by the invasive Boa constrictor as well as feral cats and dogs. However, recently there seem to be more rabbit sightings in rural and wilderness areas and also in the National Park. This could be linked to a recent decline of the invasive Boa population after the long period of drought. As the Conew can reproduce very quickly, a short break in predation pressure can lead to a fast increase of rabbits. Sadly, the Boas are back on the rise again with the truly wet rainy seasons we have recently experienced. This could cause a new decline in the Conew population that was just starting to recover.

These are but a few of Aruba's beautiful inhabitants, which we must all contribute to protect. For more information, visit <https://www.arubanationalpark.org/main/flora-fauna/> □



Conew (cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus nigronuchalis*)



Cascabel (rattlesnake, *Crotalus durissus unicolor*)



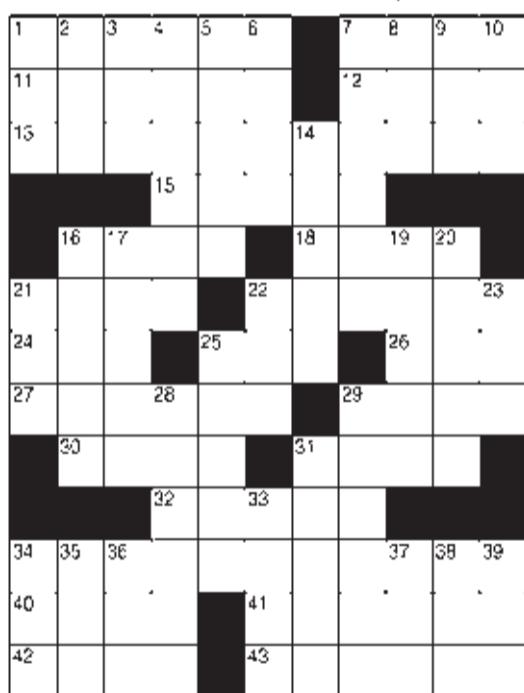
Shoco (burrowing owl, *Athene cunicularia arubensis*)

**CROSSWORD**

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 "In Cold Blood" writer 2 French friend
  - 3 "Nova" network
  - 7 Matador's need 4 Martini garnishes
  - 11 Sauntered 5 Doctrine
  - 12 Weary sigh 6 Keenness
  - 13 Up-and-comers 7 Burger topper
  - 15 High-level execs 8 In the style of
  - 16 Writer Harte 9 Golf goal
  - 18 Go fast 10 Twisty turn
  - 21 Foot features 14 Parsley unit
  - 22 Code 16 Worker's reward
  - 24 Worker in a colony 17 Stylishly quaint
  - 25 Gear part 19 Very thin
  - 26 Yale student 30 Daughter of Leda
  - 27 Sack material 31 Bar bill
  - 29 Like an abyss 32 Reduce in rank
  - 30 Bath need 33 Son of Seth
  - 31 Ocean bird 34 Like the Beatles
  - 32 Aspiration 35 Pub quaff
  - 34 Rifts 36 Record book
  - 40 Lotion additive 37 Purpose
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  - 42 Implores 39 Pig's place
  - 43 Swift
- DOWN**
- 1 Sedan or SUV

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**Yesterday's answer**

10-17

A X Y D L B A A X R  
is LONG FELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

10-17 CRYPTOQUOTE

N V J G W X A Q S C S S H S E A L K O S  
O S N E K . K O S R A E E G E M S K V  
Z X S N I S E N L C Z X S N I S E .

— E W R A

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: ANYONE WHO THINKS FALLEN LEAVES ARE DEAD HAS NEVER WATCHED THEM DANCING ON A WINDY DAY. — SHIRA TAMIR

## Someday your boss could help you save for emergencies

By LIZ WESTON  
of NerdWallet

When I wrote about employer-provided emergency savings accounts four years ago, the idea was still pretty novel. Some companies were experimenting with ways to help their workers save for short-term needs, but the concept wasn't even on the radar for many employers.

What a difference the pandemic made. Millions were thrown out of work with little warning, and few had the financial reserves to survive even a few months of unemployment. Big employers, and lawmakers, took notice, says Claire Chamberlain, global head of social impact for investment manager BlackRock. The result: Hundreds of thousands of workers now have options to build emergency savings through their employers, and Congress passed laws to encourage more companies to add short-term savings options.

"I think a lot of people woke up," Chamberlain says.

### PANDEMIC HIGHLIGHTED AMERICANS' FINANCIAL FRAGILITY

Employers tend to overestimate their workers' financial stability, says Timothy Flacke, co-founder and executive director of Commonwealth, a nonprofit that promotes financial security. The pandemic brought home the reality that most Americans live paycheck to paycheck, and many have little or no emergency savings.

"COVID really changed a lot of things in terms of an employer's understanding of the day-to-day financial challenges of their people," Flacke says.

In this April 2, 2018, file photo, an IRS Form 5305, Simplified Employee Pension — Individual Retirement Accounts Contribution Agreement is shown in New York.

Associated Press

But there's also been a growing awareness that emergency savings are key to financial health, he says. Even a small amount of savings can help families avoid falling behind on bills or turning to high cost loans. Workers without emergency savings are less likely to contribute to retirement plans, and those with savings are less likely to tap the retirement savings they have, Flacke says.

In addition, companies are aware that financial stress takes a toll on workers' productivity by distracting them during working hours, Chamberlain says.

### PUSH FOR EMERGENCY SAVINGS PICKS UP STEAM

In 2019, BlackRock launched its Emergency Savings Initiative in partnership with Commonwealth, the Financial Health Network and a third nonprofit, Common Cents Lab. The initiative started with a handful of employers and financial services firms experimenting with emergency savings programs.

Since the pandemic be-

gan, those companies have been joined by several big employers — including UPS, Starbucks, Delta Air Lines and Best Buy. Some provide incentives to encourage savings: Delta will chip in up to \$1,000 for workers who complete a financial education program, for example, while Starbucks contributes up to \$250.

One of the biggest hits so far is a savings feature that payroll processor ADP added to its Wisely prepaid debit card and app. Wisely can be used by employers to pay workers as an alternative to checks or direct deposit. The savings feature allows users to set up automatic transfers to a "savings envelope," and transfer savings back to their available balance whenever they need to spend the money. By the end of 2022, Wisely users had saved more than \$1.55 billion, Chamberlain says.

### DON'T EXPECT AN EMERGENCY SAVINGS PLAN AT OPEN ENROLLMENT

We're a long way from employer-provided emergency savings accounts being as common as employer-provided health insurance or retirement plans. But momentum seems to be building.

"It is rare that I have a conversation with an organization of any size that is not thinking about emergency savings," says Matt Bahl, Financial Health Network's vice president and head of workplace financial health. □

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## What Google's antitrust trial means for your search habits

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE  
AP Technology Writer

If government regulators prevail against Google in the biggest U.S. antitrust trial in a quarter century, it's likely to unleash drastic changes that will undermine the dominance of a search engine that defines the internet for billions of people.

As the 10-week trial probing Google's business practices nears its midway point, it's still too early to tell if U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta will side with the Justice Department and try to handcuff one of the world's most dominant tech companies. If Mehta rules that Google has been running an illegal monopoly in search, the punishment could open up new online avenues for consumers and businesses to explore in pursuit of information, entertainment and commerce.

"The judge can compel Google to open the floodgates so more startups and third-party competitors can put greater competitive pressure on Google, which will create higher quality online services," said Luther Lowe, senior vice president of public policy at Yelp. The online business review site has been one of Google's harshest critics while spending more than a decade railing against a strategy that favors its own services in search results. Google's search engine earned its huge market



This photo, in New York, taken Sept. 11, 2023, shows various Google logos when searched on Google.

Associated Press

share by almost instantaneously presenting people with helpful information culled from the billions of websites that have been indexed since former Stanford University graduate students Larry Page and Sergey Brin developed the technology during the late 1990s.

In addition to its technological wizardry, Google also pays billions of dollars each year to ensure its search engine is the default choice for answering queries entered in the world's most popular smartphones and web browsers.

These agreements don't preclude users from switching to a different search engine in their settings, but it's a tedious process that few people bother to navigate. This reality is why Google is willing to pay so much for the privileged position, according to the Justice Department.

Google's payments for pre-eminent search placement — including an estimated \$15 billion to \$20 billion per year to Apple alone — are at the head of the Justice Department's case, making it probable the judge would prohibit them if he rules against Google.

Should that happen, experts believe the most likely remedy in the U.S. would be a requirement for smartphones and web browsers to display a pal-

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ette of different search engines during the setup process. That's something already being done in Europe, where all indications, so far, are that most people are still opting for Google. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella asserted Google has an almost hypnotic hold on users while testifying earlier this month during the trial.□

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## Natasha from 'Natasha's Kitchen' makes waves in the food world

By MARK KENNEDY

AP Entertainment Writer

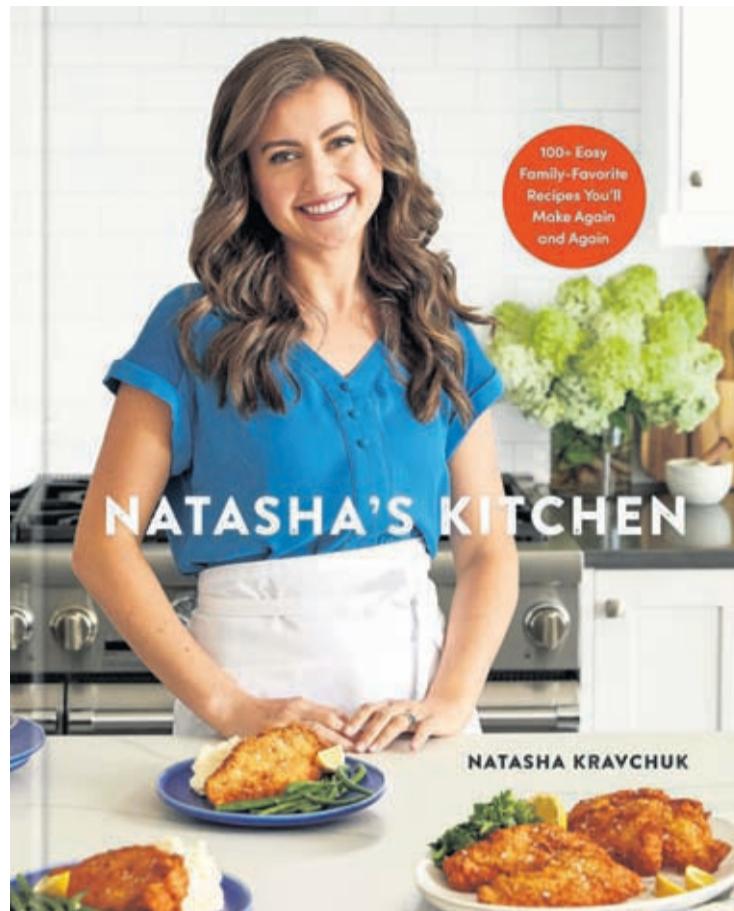
**NEW YORK (AP)** — It started with a simple salad. Natasha Kravchuk began building a cooking mini-empire by combining cucumber, tomato and avocado. When a TV anchor shared the recipe on Facebook in 2015, the dish went viral.

"I think that was the recipe that kind of gave us the first lift," says Kravchuk, whose online hub Natasha's Kitchen has grown to some 13 million followers across social media. "I think that's trademark for what you can find on Natasha's Kitchen."

Kravchuk's philosophy is indeed mixed into that salad — flavorful food that doesn't take a long time, uses regular ingredients and doesn't hurt the pocketbook.

"It's turning humble and just simple ingredients into something really delicious," she says. "That just has always carried through with me. I don't think you need saffron to make something taste incredible, you know?" This fall, Kravchuk has put her expertise into her debut cookbook, "Natasha's Kitchen: 100+ Easy Family-Favorite Recipes You'll Make Again and Again," which includes dishes such as Salmon Piccata and Turkey Meatball Soup, and Crispy Bacon Jalapeno Poppers.

"It's approachable. You can look at the list of ingredients and be like, 'OK, I have most



This cover image released by Clarkson Potter shows "Natasha's Kitchen: 100+ Easy Family-Favorite Recipes You'll Make Again and Again: A Cookbook" by Natasha Kravchuk.

Associated Press

of those things already.' The steps are simple and they are recipes that work," she says. The book is classic, chicken-soup cooking — and, indeed, there's a recipe for that on page 115. There's even a dish — Zuppa Toscana — inspired by an Olive Garden offering. "I make it better," she says, laughing. There are American classics like baked mac and cheese and blueberry muffins, and gentle nods to Mexico, Italy, France and

Asia. There's a heavy lean on traditional Ukrainian recipes passed down from Kravchuk's mother, like classic borscht and pierogies. "We cook a little bit of everything now, but I think people trust our taste in food and and they can relate to the values that we have," she says. Ukrainian-born Kravchuk and her family fled religious persecution in the 1980s and eventually found their way to Meridian, Idaho. At one

point, they relied on food banks, a fact not lost on her these days. "I was telling my husband, 'God has a sense of humor to give this refugee a cookbook,'" she says.

She didn't start cooking until later in life and started blogging in 2009. "When I got married, I wanted to recreate the same foods we grew up loving and enjoy. So I started learning how to cook. I started going to the library, getting stacks of books, asking my mom, my mother-in-law for recipes and friends."

Susan Roxborough, Kravchuk's editor at Clarkson Potter, loved Kravchuk's personal story and her book proposal — especially the teriyaki salmon, with brown sugar, hoisin, soy sauce, garlic and ginger. She found the author down-to-earth and relatable.

"It was easy to imagine her as your next-door neighbor or maybe a fellow parent at a bake sale at your kid's school," Roxborough says. Roxborough and her daughter made Kravchuk's pierogi together — a fun time bonding, as well as delicious — and says she's become obsessed with the recipe for Tres Leches Cupcakes. "It's dangerously good," she says. The cookbook, which last week debuted at No. 2 on The New York Times' Advice, How-To & Miscellaneous list, contains a dozen or so reader favorites, but most of the recipes are new, split into

breakfast, snacks, salads, soups, mains, sides and desserts. A battalion of over 300 testers have kicked the tires on each dish.

The book includes Kravchuk's mother's Ukrainian pancakes, which call for yeasted batter. She says they puff up like donuts when they hit the hot oil, and have a subtle sourdough-like flavor.

"They just need a little bit of time to pop up. But the beauty of those is you can make them and enjoy them for several days, whereas the typical pancakes with baking soda or baking powder, they're really only good the first day," she says.

Another favorite is a chicken pot pie, which Kravchuk says is a top 10 favorite on her site. "It's such a comforting meal. There is just no comparison to store-bought," she adds.

"It really isn't complicated. I think people realize that the first time they make it, that it's just such a comforting thing to make. And it reheats well, too."

Kravchuk spotted two items to put together during warm weather — bacon and corn — and came up with a dish that will cause every parent to slap their forehead because they didn't already do it by now. One of her nieces named it "Ba-Corn" and that simply can't be improved upon.

Kravchuk didn't follow the food world's traditional route for a rising chef. □

## Live Review: Madonna's Celebration Tour kicks off in London after health scare



Madonna appears at the 30th annual GLAAD Media Awards in New York on May 4, 2019, in New York.

Associated Press

By SIAN WATSON

Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — Madonna kicked off her career-spanning Celebration Tour at London's O2 Arena on Saturday night, marking her first performance since suffering what her manager called a "serious bacterial infection" that led to hospitalization in an intensive care unit for several days back in June.

"I'm on the road to recovery and incredibly grateful for all the blessings in my life," the pop superstar wrote on Instagram this summer, shortly after news of the ICU stay broke. "My focus now is on my health and getting stron-

ger and I assure you, I'll be back with you as soon as I can."

On stage, Madonna, 65, said she'd had a "crazy year" that neither she nor her doctors thought she'd make it through. She said her children spurred her on and that she had to "survive for them." The opening night of the tour also marked the 27th birthday of daughter Lourdes Leon, who appeared on stage with her mother.

After a brief technical hitch, the opening night of the tour was indeed a celebration. Madonna played songs from across her vast career, including studio recordings

and footage drawing on four decades of hits. On the set list were iconic songs from "Like a Prayer" to "Holiday" to "Vogue" to "La Isla Bonita." She also included more niche tracks such as "Die Another Day" from the 2002 Bond movie of the same name.

During an acoustic moment in the show, Madonna spoke out about the ongoing war in the Middle East.

"Even though our hearts are broken, our spirits cannot be broken," she said, adding that she hopes for a "collective consciousness to change the world and bring peace." □

## Chelsea Gray's status for Game 4 of WNBA Finals still unclear after foot injury

By DOUG FEINBERG

AP Basketball Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Chelsea Gray's status for Game 4 of the WNBA Finals is still unclear.

The Las Vegas Aces guard was injured in Game 3 on Sunday midway through the fourth quarter. The Aces canceled an optional shootaround Monday less than an hour before it was supposed to begin.

Gray left in the fourth quarter of Las Vegas' 87-73 loss to New York with what coach Becky Hammon said was probably a foot injury. She had to be helped back to the locker room and appeared to be in a lot of pain.

Gray, who is averaging 15.6 points and 6.8 assists in the playoffs this year, has been durable throughout her time with Las Vegas since joining the team as a free agent in 2021, missing only one game.

If Gray can't play in Game 4 on Wednesday night, Hammon has faith in her other guards.

"We (could) do it by committee," Hammon said after the game. "I don't think there's any one person that's going to step up and fill her shoes. Everybody steps up and does a little bit more."

The Aces lead the best-of-five series 2-1.

The 2022 WNBA Finals MVP



New York Liberty's Sabrina Ionescu, right, defends Las Vegas Aces' Chelsea Gray during the second half in Game 3 of a WNBA basketball final playoff series, Sunday, Oct. 15, 2023, in New York.

Associated Press

scored 11 points before getting hurt. She was battling Breanna Stewart in the post when she appeared to get injured. Gray came up hobbling, but remained in the game as play continued. She missed a 3-pointer on the ensuing possession. A few seconds later, Hammon took a timeout to get the guard out of the game. "I didn't see what happened. I hope she's OK," Stewart said. Liberty coach Sandy Brondello said New York wouldn't change anything about getting ready for Game 4

based on Gray's status. "When someone goes down, someone else will step up," Brondello said. "Our mindset is more about what we need to do to get ready for Wednesday. If Chelsea plays or she doesn't play, our preparation won't change."

The Aces had only 13 assists Sunday to 28 by the Liberty, who are looking to become the first team to rally from an 0-2 deficit in the Finals. "First, prayers to her," New York guard Sabrina Ionescu said of Gray. "As an athlete, that's your worst nightmare

— going down with an injury. We're all praying for her to be OK and hoping it was nothing too serious. But we're not looking forward on that. We just have to focus on ourselves, understanding they're a great team with or without her."

The Aces depth was one of the teams major questions coming into the season. Coming off the championship last year, Las Vegas hoped to increase its depth, but because of an injury to Candace Parker that has sidelined her since late July and Riquna Williams' legal

issues, the team hasn't been able to do that.

The Aces have had to rely heavily on their four stars — Gray, Wilson, Jackie Young and Kelsey Plum — this season. The four have combined to average 75 of the team's 88 points a game in the playoffs.

Gray's injury is the latest in a long line of distractions that the defending champion Aces have had to overcome this season. Before the WNBA's 27th season began, the league investigated the team after former Aces player Dearica Hamby said she had been bullied and manipulated for being pregnant.

The WNBA suspended Hammon for two games and also rescinded the Aces' first-round pick in the 2025 draft for a different issue — a violation of league rules regarding impermissible player benefits.

Unhappy with the league's findings, Hamby then filed a gender discrimination complaint last month against the WNBA and the Aces with the Nevada Equal Rights Commission and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

"A lot of adversity and pretty much my girls have held their tongues, been professional the whole time and went about their business," Hammon said. □

## Kim Ng, MLB's 1st female GM, is leaving the Miami Marlins

**MIAMI (AP)** — Kim Ng is leaving the Miami Marlins after three seasons as general manager, Marlins chairman and principal owner Bruce Sherman announced Monday.

Ng, 54, became the majors' highest-ranking woman in baseball operations and the first female GM in the four major North American professional sports leagues in a groundbreaking hire in November 2020.

The Marlins exercised their team option for her to return for the 2024 season, Sherman said in a statement, but Ng declined her

mutual option.

"Last week, Bruce and I discussed his plan to reshape the Baseball Operations department. In our discussions, it became apparent that we were not completely aligned on what that should look like," Ng told the Athletic on Monday. "I felt it best to step away. I wish to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Marlins family and its fans for my time in South Florida. This year was a great step forward for the organization." When the Marlins first hired her, Ng said at the time

that it was the product of years of determination and an honor.

"When I got into this business, it seemed unlikely a woman would lead a major league team," she said then, "but I am dogged in the pursuit of my goals. My goal is now to bring championship baseball to Miami."

The Marlins were a dormant franchise before they made the postseason during the pandemic-shortened 2020 season, which was Year 3 in the rebuilding effort of former CEO Derek Jeter, who brought in Ng.



Miami Marlins General Manager Kim Ng speaks with the news media, Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023, in Miami.

Associated Press

National League Division Series, but Miami showed flashes of promise and brought in Ng at the end of that season to help surge the club forward. □

## Eagles, 49ers beat themselves, leaving NFL with no undefeated teams



New York Jets' Breece Hall, center, reacts after scoring a touchdown during the second half of an NFL football game against the Philadelphia Eagles, Sunday, Oct. 15, 2023, in East Rutherford, N.J.

Associated Press

By ROB MAADDI  
AP Pro Football Writer

The NFL's last two undefeated teams beat themselves. The San Francisco 49ers and Philadelphia Eagles struggled on the road against inferior opponents with backup quarterbacks and tough defenses.

That allowed Larry Csonka and his teammates from the 1972 Miami Dolphins to pop the champagne bottles in October. They'll remain the only perfect team in league history for at least another year.

The Buffalo Bills, the NFL's biggest favorite so far this season, also had problems on Sunday facing a losing team and a backup quarterback but they held on at the 1-yard line for a 14-9 win over the New York Giants. Brock Purdy looked ordinary without his top two playmakers in San Francisco's 19-17 loss at Cleveland. Jalen Hurts made a critical mistake in Philadelphia's 20-14 loss to the Jets.

But there was plenty of blame to go around.

Despite Purdy's poor performance — his first in 14 career starts, including playoffs — the 49ers (5-1) were in position to win the game at the end. However, rookie kicker Jake Moody missed a 41-yard field goal with six seconds remaining.

"It's always tough to miss that last kick but that happens in football," 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan said. "They played better than us today and that was the last play

but there was a lot more today than just that."

The game shouldn't have come down to a field goal for the 49ers, who came in averaging 33.4 points and 402.6 yards. The Browns held San Francisco to just 215 yards and Purdy had a 55.3 passer rating — less than half his career mark of 114.4.

The 49ers couldn't overcome losing all-purpose stars Christian McCaffrey and Deebo Samuel to injuries. Give credit to the Browns and their top-ranked defense. Myles Garrett and the rest of defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz's crew have been staunch most of the season. They helped Cleveland get the win despite two interceptions by P.J. Walker, who started for Deshaun Watson.

"You get opportunities and you've got to take advantage of them. There were definitely some throws and opportunities there for me that I missed," Purdy said. "It's something I've got to learn from. We've all got to look at ourselves in the mirror and see the flaws and get better from it. That starts with me." The Eagles (5-1) committed four turnovers and couldn't take advantage of a defense missing starting cornerbacks Sauce Gardner and D.J. Reed. Hurts' third interception came right after the two-minute warning with Philadelphia clinging to a 14-12 lead. Hurts said he made the wrong read on the play when he threw into double coverage to New York's Tony Adams, who re-

turned it to the 8 to set up Breece Hall's go-ahead TD run.

Hurts and the Eagles had a chance at redemption with 1:46 but Hurts threw three incomplete passes, including a deep ball on fourth-and-8 that was nearly picked. Philadelphia's reliable kicker Jake Elliott also missed a 37-yard field goal earlier in the fourth quarter after making 16 of 17 to start the season. "You turn the ball over four times you shouldn't expect to win," Hurts said. "It's an opportunity to look ourselves in the mirror and respond and I have confidence that this team will do so."

Zach Wilson played error-free ball to become the first quarterback to lead the Jets to a victory over Philadelphia in 13 meetings between the two franchises. The Giants (1-5) had a shot to pull off the biggest upset of the season but Tyrod Taylor threw incomplete to Darren Waller from the 1 on the final play of the game. New York wouldn't have needed a touchdown at that point if Taylor managed the clock better at the end of the first half.

Taylor appeared to audible to a run play at the Bills 1 with 14 seconds left. Saquon Barkley was stopped for no gain and the Giants had no timeouts remaining. Coach Brian Daboll was livid with Taylor. Missing out on three points at that point ended up costing New York at the end.

While the Eagles and 49ers suffered their first losses, the Dolphins and Detroit Lions both improved to 5-1.

The Dolphins fell behind winless Carolina 14-0 before Tua Tagovailoa, Tyreek Hill and a dynamic offense exploded for a 42-21 win.

Jared Goff was impressive in Detroit's 20-6 win at Tampa Bay. Goff threw for 353 yards and two TDs against a difficult defense.

"We know who we are right now and we feel like we can beat anyone," Goff said.

In the NFL, any team can beat its opponent every week. Sunday was further proof. □



Texas Rangers starting pitcher Max Scherzer throws to first during fielding practice in Arlington, Texas, Friday, Oct. 13, 2023.

Associated Press

## Scherzer to start Game 3 of ALCS for Rangers against Astros

By KRISTIE RIEKEN  
AP Sports Writer

**HOUSTON (AP)** — Max Scherzer will start Game 3 of the AL Championship Series for the Texas Rangers against the Houston Astros on Wednesday night.

Scherzer, a three-time Cy Young Award winner, has been out since Sept. 12 because of a muscle strain in his shoulder.

"He's ready. That's why he's starting Game 3," manager Bruce Bochy said. "A few days ago back (at) home he threw 69 pitches to hitters and came -- he came out of that fine. And during that time, he maintained his stamina stuff. So, he was available yesterday. In fact, he said he wanted to pitch yesterday if needed, if it went extra innings or something."

Bochy said Scherzer, who was traded from the New York Mets this summer, is excited for his return.

"Believe me, he's been wearing me out a little bit, just assuring us that, hey, I'm healthy, I'm ready to go," Bochy said.

Houston hasn't announced its starter for Game 3. The 39-year-old Scherzer went 13-6 with a 3.77 ERA in 27 starts this season. He went 4-2 with a 3.20 ERA in eight starts after the trade.

Scherzer is 7-7 with a 3.58 ERA in 27 postseason games that include 22 starts. When he appears for the Rangers, it will be the fifth team he has pitched for in the postseason after the Tigers, Nationals, Dodgers and Mets.

While with Washington, he started Games 1 and 7 of the 2019 World Series against Houston. He got the win in Game 1 and didn't factor in the decision in Game 7, won by the Nationals at Minute Maid Park. He had a 3.60 ERA over 10 innings in that series.

He went 1-1 against Houston this season. He struck out eight and allowed one run in eight innings on June 19. But the Astros tagged him for seven runs, all of those coming on three homers, in three innings on Sept. 6. □